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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/454,761 12/06/99 GIBSON

R 81448

023685
KRIEGSMAN & KRIEGSMAN
665 FRANKLIN STREET
FRAMINGHAM MA 01702

IM22/1004

EXAMINER

MAT. H	<input type="checkbox"/> ART UNIT	<input type="checkbox"/> PAPER NUMBER
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1761
DATE MAILED:

10/04/01

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/454,761	GIBSON ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Hao T Mai	1761

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 December 1999.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-4 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 5-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-4, drawn to an apparatus for preparing a bone pork product, classified in class 99, subclass 355.
 - II. Claims 5-7, drawn to a method for preparing a boned pork product, classified in class 426, subclass 510.
2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because:
3. Inventions Group I and Group II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the apparatus as claimed can be used to make pizza, or cake.
4. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
5. During a telephone conversation with Daniel Driegsman on 9-13-01 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group II, claims 5-7. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 1-4 withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Art Unit: 1761

6. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a petition under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

7. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

8. Claims 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Each of the terms "high, low, mechanically" are relative terms which render the claims indefinite. The terms "high, low, mechanically" are not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hansson et al(5,314,705) in view of Dagerskog et al(4,565,704). Hanson teaches a method for

Art Unit: 1761

preparing a frozen meal package comprising the steps of, applying radiant heat to the pork product at a high temperature cooking station(col. 1, lines 45+), applying steam to the pork product at a low temperature cooking station to yield a fully-cooked, pork product(col. 1, lines 55+), and freezing the food product(col. 2, lines 30+). Hansson teaches all of the claimed limitations except for a boned pork product. Dagerskog teaches a food product comprising pork chops(col. 3, lines 15+). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to make in Hansson food product the pork chops as taught by Dagerskog, since Dagerskop teaches that the pork chops can be frozen and packaged.

11. Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hansson in view of Dagerskog and further in view of Perrine et al(4,867,994). Hansson in view of Dagerskog teaches all of the claimed limitations except for the step of mechanically transporting the product from the high temperature cooking station to the low temperature cooking station and to the freezing station. Perrine teaches a method step of mechanically transporting the product from the high temperature cooking station to the low temperature cooking station and to the freezing station(col. 8, lines 65+, col. 9, lines 50+, col. 10, lines 5+, col. 11, lines 10+). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to prepare a frozen meal package by transporting the product from the high temperature cooking station to the low temperature cooking station and to the freezing station mechanically as taught by Perrine, since Perrine teaches the conventional method of using a conveyor when transporting product to other stations, and since this save time and laborof a human transporting the product.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hao T Mai whose telephone number is (703)306-9171. The examiner can normally be reached on 8AM-7PM; MON-THU.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton Cano can be reached on (703)308-3959. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)305-3599 for regular communications and (703)305-7718 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0661.

hm
October 1, 2001



KEITH HENDRICKS
PRIMARY EXAMINER